

means for programming the timer, and reading means for receiving an electronically readable information carrier with a programmable memory capable of containing a numerical value, and wherein the timer is coupled at least temporarily to the programming means, which programming means comprise the reading means and, at least temporarily, the electronically readable information carrier.

B6 *prc4* --12. A method of activating a function of a programmable device having plural functions that are selectively activated, the method comprising the steps of:

electronically reading an electronically readable information carrier on which a first value is stored;

coupling the programmable device having plural functions that are selectively activated to a program capable of selectively activating the plural functions;

selecting for activation at least one of the plural functions;

activating the selected function;

coupling the program to the information carrier; and

debiting from the first value a second value of the activated function.--